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THE LATE GLORIOUS VICTORY.

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JOURNAL

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS OF HIS MAJESTY'S FLEET,

UNDER THE COMMAND OF

SIR JOHN JERVIS, K. B.

On the 14th FEBRUARY 1797.

Illuſtrated with an Engraved Plan of the Action:

To which are added,

INTERESTING LETTERS FROM OFFICERS WHO WERE IN THE ACTION.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM CREECH.

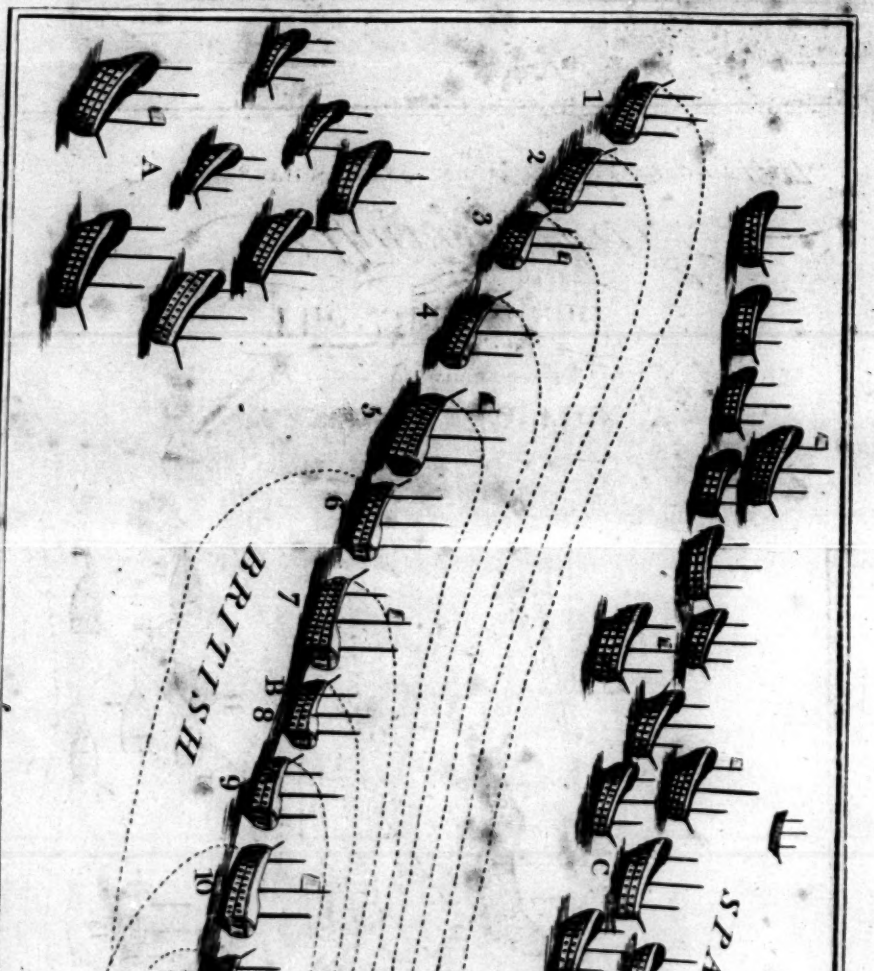
1797.

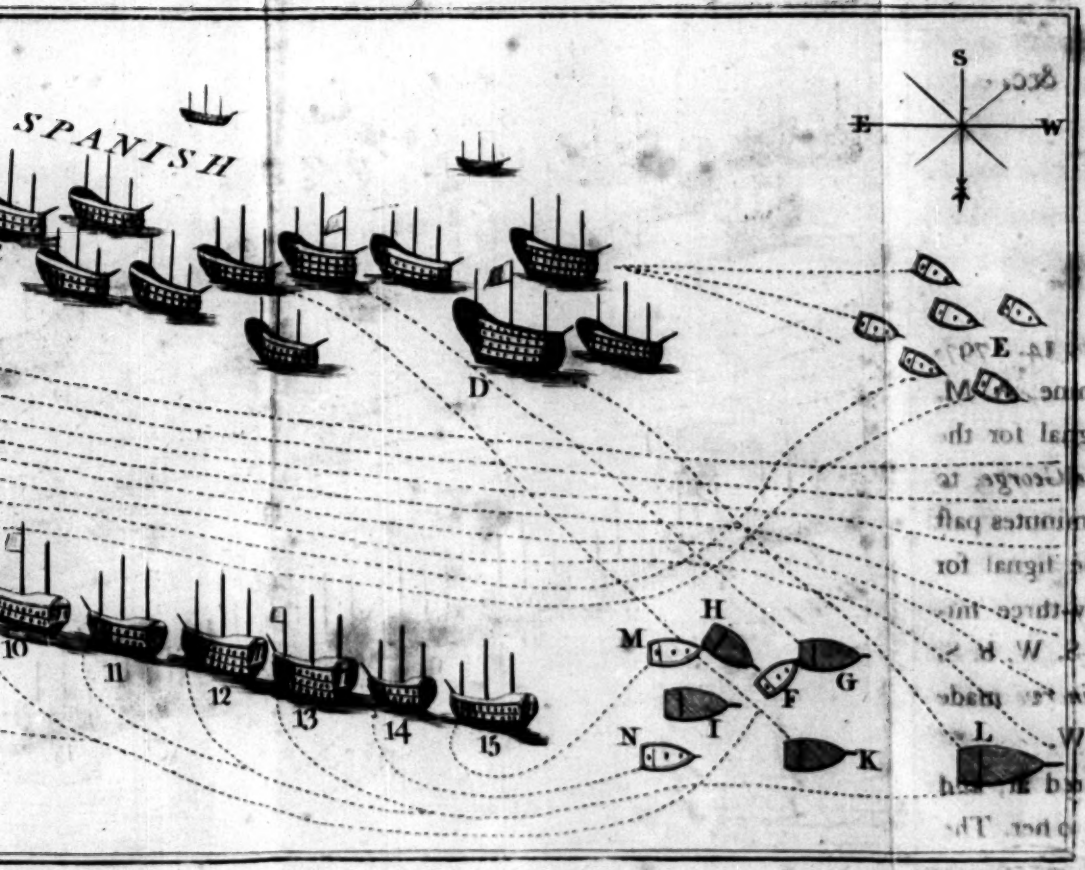
PLAN OF THE ACTION

between

The British and Spanish Fleets,

OFF CAPE ST. VINCENT, *the 14th of February 1797.*

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JOURNAL, &c.

Tueſday, Feb. 14. 1797.

AT twenty minutes paſt nine, A. M. the *Victory* made the ſignal for the *Blenheim*, *Culloden*, and *Prince George*, to chace, S. b. W. At fifty-one minutes paſt nine, *La Bonne Citoyenne* made ſignal for eight ſail, S. W. b. S. At fifty-three minutes paſt nine, the *Irreſiſtible*, S. W. b. S. At ten minutes paſt ten, *La Minerve* made the ſignal for twenty ſail in S. W.

The *Fox* Cutter, S. S. E. fired at, and brought to, a brig, which ſtruck to her. The *Fox* then chaced another.

At twenty-five minutes past ten, a ship in the S. E. made the signal for eight sail of the enemy's line, through the haze, apparently in great confusion, with their heads different ways. At fifty-five minutes past ten, the *Bonne Citoyenne* made signal for twenty-five sail of the line—the enemy a-head, endeavouring to form on the larboard tack.—Observed one of their line-of-battle ships with her fore-top-mast gone.

At eleven o'clock, the Admiral made the signal to form the line of battle a-head and a-stern of the Admiral, as most convenient, bearing S. S. W. At sixteen minutes past eleven, the signal to alter the course one point to port in succession. At twenty-five minutes past eleven, the Admiral made signal that the *Victory* would take her station a-stern of the *Colossus*. At twenty-seven minutes past eleven, the signal to alter the course one point to starboard in succession.

Observed a Vice-Admiral in a three-decked ship, four two-deckers, and some

frigates

frigates of the enemy, separate from the body of the fleet, and bearing up with the wind on the ſtarboard beam, ſteering about S. E.

At twenty-nine minutes paſt eleven, the ſignal was made, when, having the weather gage of the enemy, the Admiral meant to paſs between the ſhips of their line, for engaging them to leeward; or, being to leeward, to paſs between them for obtaining the weather gage.

The enemy's ſhips (five) in S. E. hauled their wind again, and endeavoured to form on the ſtarboard tack.

Thirty-four minutes paſt eleven, the ſignal to come to the wind on the ſtarboard tack in ſucceſſion, our rear and centre forming as they arrived up; the *Culloden* took her ſtation a-head in the line of battle; the *Blenheim* ſecond, with the *Prince George* on her lee bow, and *Orion* on her lee quarter.

At thirty-five minutes paſt eleven, the ſignal was made to engage: the *Culloden* began a hot and well directed fire, which

was

was immediately returned from the enemy's van and centre, and which brought on a general action as the fleets paſſed on different tacks.

At forty minutes paſt eleven, the *Prince George* and *Orion* began to fire at the enemy between the *Culloden* and the *Blenheim*, as they could get their guns to bear. At twelve, having paſſed the rear of the enemy, the *Culloden* tacked her ſignal,—obſerved the five ſail, ſix frigates, a ſtore-ſhip, and a brig of the enemy to leeward, to tack to the northward.

At ſix minutes paſt twelve, the *Blenheim* tacked and cloſed with the *Culloden*. The *Prince George* and *Orion* tacked and formed in her rear.

At nineteen minutes paſt twelve, the *Colloſſus* carried away her fore and fore-top-ſail-yards in ſtays and miſſed ſtays, but wore immediately, and came to the wind on the larboard tack—the enemy's fleet bearing N. by E. diſtant about two or three miles, going large with the wind abaft their beam. At

twenty

twenty minutes paſt twelve, the *Culloden's* ſignal to alter her courſe, one point to ſtarboard. At twenty-two minutes paſt twelve, the ſignal when having the weather gage of the enemy, the Admiral meant to preſs between them for obtaining the weather gage.

At thirty minutes paſt twelve, the Spaniſh Admiral with five ſail in the S. E. opened their fire on the *Victory* and centre of our fleet in paſſing them. At thirty-three minutes paſt twelve, obſerved the Spaniſh Admiral's ſhip all a-back, the five ſail wore and ſtood to the ſouthward, the *Victory* in ſtays. At thirty-five minutes paſt twelve, obſerved the *Captain* ſteer and make ſail to the northward on the larboard tack. At forty-two minutes paſt twelve, the *Captain* took her ſtation in the van, a-head of the *Culloden*. At forty-three minutes paſt twelve, the *Captain* and *Culloden* began to engage the centre of the enemy, who appeared to be in confuſion, not having their line formed in any order; ſome of their ſhips with their main-ſails ſet, others

with

with their yards ſquare. At fifty-two minutes paſt twelve, the enemy hauled their wind on the larboard tack; the *Britannia's* ſignal was made to tack; obſerved the five ſail of the enemy in S. E. under a preſs of ſail on the ſtarboard-tack; one of the enemy's line of battle ſhips nearly a-breaſt of us, with the main-ſail and main top-ſail a-back. At two minutes paſt one, the ſignal for ſhips to take ſuitable ſtations for their mutual ſupport, and engage the enemy, as arriving up with them.

At thirteen minutes paſt one, the ſignal for the *Minerve* to take the *Coloſſus* in tow. At twenty-five minutes paſt one, the ſignal to come to the wind on the larboard tack in ſucceſſion. The *Culloden* and *Captain*, with their mizen top-ſails a-back, their ſails and rigging appeared to be much cut. At thirty-ſix minutes paſt one, the *Prince George* made the ſignal to make ſail after laying by. At forty minutes paſt one, the *Captain* took her ſtation in the line a-ſtern of the *Culloden*, at about three cables diſtant,

tant, and opened her fire on the enemy. At fifty minutes paſt one, the ſignal to haul the wind on the larboard tack.

At two, one of the enemy's ſhips had her main-top-maſt ſhot away. At thirty minutes paſt two, a four decked ſhip on the *Blenheim*'s larboard beam, two two-deckers nearly a-ſtern of her, and a two-decker to windward of all, kept up a conſtant fire. The ſmoke clearing away a little, obſerved one of the enemy's ſhips with her mizen-maſt gone. At twenty-ſeven minutes paſt three backed our main-top-ſail, cloſe back to the *Captain*, ſhe being in cloſe action with three of the enemy's line. At thirty-ſeven minutes paſt three, the *Captain* loſt her fore-top-maſt; one of the enemy's ſhips nearly on board of the *Captain*, the Spaniſh ſhip with her mizen-maſt gone on her weather bow, firing a few guns now and then;—obſerved the *Excellent* paſs the *Captain*, take her ſtation on our weather quarter, and bring too.

At forty minutes paſt three, obſerved the *Captain*, the ſhip ſhe was engaging, and the ſhip with her mizen-maſt gone, on board of each other. At forty-five minutes paſt three, obſerved the *Culloden* take her ſtation again in the line, a-ſtern of the *Excellent*. Left off firing—the *Excellent* being on our larboard beam—began to repair our rigging, &c.

At four, the ſmoke cleared away a-ſtern—obſerved a three decker and a two-decked ſhip had ſtruck, beſides the two on board the *Captain*: The ſignal for the fleet to bring to—eleven minutes paſt four; the enemy's four-decker loſt her main-top-maſt—the headmoſt of our ſhips in cloſe action with the enemy—obſerved the five ſail who were cut off in the morning ſtanding into the fleet, under a preſs of ſail to windward, and firing in paſſing our fleet.

At twenty minutes paſt four, the ſignal for the frigates of the fleet to take ſhips in tow;—at twenty-ſeven minutes paſt four, the ſignal to come to the wind on the ſtar-

board

board tack;—at forty-nine minutes paſt four, wore.

At fifty minutes paſt four, the firing ceaſed on both ſides—the enemy's ſhips veering and ſecuring their diſabled ſhips.—The four-decker, who apparently had ſtruck her colours, getting away under her fore-ſail, part of her main-ſail, fore-top-ſail, with the ſheets cut away, and yard down, and mizen-top-ſail, the yard down, the ſheets cut away.

At eleven minutes paſt five, ſignal to form the line in cloſe order.—Frigates ſecuring the prizes, and taking them in tow. The enemy, at ſun-ſet, on the larboard tack, ſtanding to the northward, under all ſail—the wind S. W. by W.

I have ſent you as perfect a detail as could be minuted. The ſhip from which it was taken was one of thoſe moſt warmly engaged—we received, with the other ſhips, the fire of eighteen ſhips in firſt paſſing the line,

line, and were of eſſential ſervice in preſerving the rear towards the concluſion of the action, and in conſequence ſecuring the prizes, by opening a tremendous fire on a three-decker, one of the freſh ſhips which came down, and, who giving us a broadſide, luffed up, not liking the return ſhe received; and after firing ſome ſhot on our quarter, and over us, one of which went through our main-top-ſail, and another dodged on the fore-top-maſt, thought fit to give over her deſign, and with the reſidue bore away.

FEBRUARY 17.

The whole of this day they have been tacking and wearing in our ſight off the Bay, into which one of their frigates had the impudence to run, ſhewing her colours; but on the *Lively's* ſignal being made to ſlip and go after her, ſhe as inſtantly made ſail. In the evening the *Goliah* ſlipped her cable and went out, and we are in hopes of ſeeing the Don brought in, as well

as

as the *Mountain* of a ſhip, for ſo ſhe is; *the four-decker*, who had ſtruck her flag, and it is ſaid was yeſterday ſeen *towing in by two of our frigates.* This has proved a proud day for *England.*

Commodore Nelſon is a *Lion*, and took poſſeſſion of his ſhip by boarding her from the bowſprit, himſelf leading, and being the firſt on board. The *Culloden* behaved nobly; the *Blenheim* nobly; ſhe had forty-ſix ſhot through her mizen-ſtay-ſail, and 2000 grape ſhot were afterwards picked out of her hammocks, of which they had providently made a ſtrong barricado.

The Rear-Admiral in the *St. Joſeph*, had before loſt an arm in action with the Engliſh, and the ſame ſhot, which deprived him of both his legs and life, carried away the leg of the pilot near him.

Every ſhip engaged did her beſt; and though the ſwift ſailers had naturally more of the action, no atom of credit is to be taken away from a ſingle Officer in the fleet.

REF-

REFERENCES.

The *dotted lines* ſhew the courſe of the Britiſh ſhips, after tacking and veering.

The *oblong lines* ſhew the courſe of the Spaniſh ſhips, after having paſſed the Britiſh line.

A. Five ſail of the Spaniſh line, and ſome frigates, ſeparated from the body of the fleet.

B. Britiſh fleet, in cloſe line of battle, on the ſtarboard tack.

1. Culloden, 74 Capt. Troubridge.
2. Blenheim, 90 Capt. Frederick.
3. Pr. George, 98 { Rear-Ad. Parker. / Capt. T. Irwin.
4. Orion, 74 Sir J. Saumarez.
5. Barfleur, 98 { V.-Ad. Waldegrave. / Capt. J. R. Dacres.
6. Coloſſus, 74 Capt. G. Murray.
7. Victory, 100 { Ad. Sir J. Jervis. / 1ſt Capt. Calder. / 2d Capt. G. Grey.
8. Egmont, 74 Capt. Sutton.
9. Goliah, 74 Capt. Sir C. Knowles.
10. Captain, 74 { Commodore Nelſon. / Capt. R. W. Miller.

11. Excellent, 74 Capt. C. Collingwood.
12. Namur, 98 Capt. J. H. Whitſhed.
13. Britannia, 100 { Vice-Ad. Thompſon. Capt. T. Foley.
14. Diadem, 64 Capt. Towry.
15. Irreſiſtible, 74 Capt. Martin.

C. The body of the Spaniſh fleet, in an irregular line to windward, engaging the Britiſh as they paſs.

D. The *Santiſſima Trinidada*, which, with ſome other ſhips, bore down to leeward.

E. Several Spaniſh ſhips, that had kept their wind, lying in confuſion, and frequently firing into one another.

F. The *Captain*, of 74 guns, on board the *San Nicolas* and *San Joſef*, at the ſame time.

G. *San Nicolas*, of 84 guns, taken.

H. *San Joſef*, of 112 guns, taken.

I. *Salvador del Mundo*, taken.

K. *San Iſidro*, taken.

L. *Santiſſima Trinidada* ſtruck, but afterwards got off by ſome freſh ſhips coming from the windward to her aſſiſtance.

M. *Irreſiſtible* engaged with *Salvador del Mundo*.

N. *Diadem* ditto, till the *Victory*, and ſome heavier ſhips, came up.

Copy

Copy of a Letter from an Officer of Sir John Jervis's Fleet.

On board the Excellent, off Lagos, Feb. 17. 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I AM sure you will be happy to hear from me after such a day as we had on the 14th (Valentine's day) a glorious one indeed, such as seldom falls to the lot of any mortal to triumph in. We were cruizing at sea off Cape St Vincents, when the Admiral first received information that the Spanish fleet were come down the Mediterranean; and in a day or two afterwards, that they were in our neighbourhood, 27 sail of the line, with 10 or 12 frigates. We were only 15 sail of the line, with 4 frigates. The Admiral, on the night of the 13th, determined to attack them. It was fine weather, but thick and hazy. We heard their signal guns, which announced their vicinity.

Soon

Soon after day-light of the 14th, we ſaw them very much ſcattered, while we were a compact little body. We flew to them as a hawk to his prey. We paſſed through them in the diſordered ſtate in which they were, and ſeparated them into two diſtinct parts, then tacked upon their largeſt diviſion. The *Culloden*, and the *Captain*, Commodore Nelſon's ſhip, were the firſt that brought them to cloſe action. Our ſhip, the *Excellent*, by chance became the Admiral's leader, (for the circumſtances would not admit of regular order), and thereby had the good fortune to get very early into action. The firſt ſhip we engaged was the *San Salvador del Mundo*, a firſt rate, of 112 guns. We were not farther from her when we began than about 50 yards. Her colours ſoon came down, and her fire ceaſed. Our Captain hailed her, and aſked if they ſurrendered; when, by ſigns made by the man who ſtood by the colours, he underſtood they had,—and we left her to be taken poſſeſſion of by a

frigate behind, and made ſail for the next. But we were much ſurpriſed, on looking back, to ſee her colours up again, and her battle recommenced. We ſoon came up with the next, the *San Iſidore*, a 74, ſo cloſe along-ſide, that a man might have jumped from one ſhip to the other. Our fire carried all before it, and in ten minutes ſhe hauled down her colours; but as our captain had been once deceived, he made this fellow hoiſt Engliſh colours before he left her, and made a ſignal for ſome body behind to board her. The Admiral immediately ordered the *Lively Frigate* to take charge of her. We then made all the ſail we could; and paſſing between our line and that of the enemy, we came up to the *San Nicholas* of 84 guns, which happened at that time to be a-breaſt of the *San Joſeph* of 112 guns. We did not touch ſides, but you could not have put a bodkin between us, ſo that our ſhot paſſed through both ſhips. In attempting to extricate themſelves, they got on board each other. Commodore Nelſon

ſon had been long engaged with thoſe ſhips; and we came happily to his relief; for he was dreadfully mauled. Having engaged them till their fire ceaſed on us, though their colours were not down, we went on to the *Santiſſima Trinidada*, the Spaniſh Admiral, Cordova's ſhip, of 132 guns on four compleat decks!—ſuch a ſhip as never before my eyes beheld. By this time our maſts, ſails, and rigging were ſo much ſhot, that we could not get ſo near as our Captain wiſhed, but near enough to receive much injury from her both in our men and ſhip. This ſhip we engaged for an hour, and during that time trimmed her well. She was at laſt a complete wreck, ſeveral others of our ſhips having come up and engaged her at the ſame time. But evening approaching, and the freſh Spaniards coming down on us, the Admiral made the ſignal for us to withdraw, which we did, carrying off the four ſhips which had ſurrendered to our fleet.

The ſhips longeſt and moſt engaged, were the

the *Culloden*, the *Captain*, the *Blenheim*, and *Prince George*, with the *Excellent*.

Every body did well, and I am perſuaded there will be no complaints of this little fleet; when the diſparity of force is conſidered, the taking four ſhips, two of them firſt rates, with two flag officers, is a new thing. I ſhall write you when we meet them again, which I hope will be ſoon.

I am, dear Sir,

Your's in haſte, &c.

En-

Extract of a Letter from an OFFICER *on board of* COMMODORE NELSON'S *ship, to his Father in Glaſgow, dated Lagos Bay, February* 16. 1797.

"THIS ſhip and the *Culloden* had, at one time, no leſs than 13 Spaniſh line of battle ſhips upon us, but we ſoon diſabled two of them, and ſent them a-ſtern amongſt our fleet, where they were obliged to ſtrike. —We then got cloſe up to an 84 and 112, and the Commander in Chief ſaid to carry 134 guns, and engaged them all three by ourſelves. After a ſevere conflict of about two hours, yard arm and yard arm, we, almoſt in the ſame moment, boarded the 84 and the 112, and made them both ſtrike to us. I ſuppoſe there never was before an inſtance of a ſingle 74 taking a firſt and ſecond rate at the ſame inſtant, and I really think it will be ſcarcely credited at home; but our Commodore's noble example and undaunted conduct baffled all reſiſtance."